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CAMBRIDGE CYCLING CAMPAIGN

NEWSLETTER 102 • JUNE – JULY 2012

Everyday cycling style

- How the image of cycling is changing
- Trial of two-tier cycle racks
- The Chisholm Trail: step by step
- Cycling and health
and much more...



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Cambridge Cycling Campaign was set up in 1995 to voice the concerns of cyclists. We are not a cycling club, but an organisation for lobbying and campaigning for the rights of cyclists, and for promoting cycling in and around Cambridge.

Registered charity number: 1138098

Our meetings, open to all, are on the first Tuesday of each month, 7.30 for 8.00pm at the Friends' Meeting House, Jesus Lane, Cambridge.

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NEW
ADDRESS

Co-ordinator's comment

Last month about thirty car drivers reported the loss of their vehicles which had been parked at the station. Drivers incurred considerable hardship and costs to find alternative transportation. They lost the good part of a working day trying to locate and then to retrieve their vehicle the next day. The public was outraged. Two managers lost their jobs because the removal of the vehicles was not properly advertised. Politicians had to apologise 'in the Japanese style'. Financial compensation was offered to those who temporarily lost their cars.

Well, not quite. To be precise, on 1 May about thirty bicycles were forcibly removed from station bike parking when new two-tier racks were placed for the public to offer their feedback (see next page). Locks were cut, cyclists left without transportation, on their own to retrieve their bikes, and to replace their locks. But no resignations, no apologies, no compensation, no lessons learnt. The local newspaper reported that our MP was among those affected by this outrageous act of institutional bike-theft, but presented it somehow as a funny story. Are we all having a good laugh?

Bicycles are not some kind of road trash which can be removed at will

The station manager is not the only one who has not yet been told clearly enough that bicycles are not some kind of road trash which can be removed at will. Sometimes it seems that we are dealing with an institutional bicycle-blindness syndrome. Instead of throwing planning manpower at the challenge of making a fast-growing Cambridge increasingly bicycle perfect, the city council thinks half a Cycling and Walking Officer is sufficient. A recent FOI request has revealed that this leads to serious problems. Today's wrong planning decisions will stay with us for many decades. Cambridge is a national leader in the percentage of bike trips, but the unique opportunities this involves are just not being realised. Martin Curtis, the county council's new bike Czar, has been supportive of completing the Chisholm Trail after a guided tour by our own Jim Chisholm who identified the route (see page 4). But who will make sure that traffic to and through the massive new developments is configured such that our



A cyclist tries out the new two-tier racks at Cambridge station.

mode-share will indeed reach the high levels suggested by the developers? The official bike-abduction at the station surely does not bode well for Northstowe, North-West Cambridge, Trumpington Meadows and the rest.

On a more positive note, our annual Reach Ride was again a great success, but not without meteorological challenges. (Great images on our website.) The mayor gave an inspirational speech, donned his ceremonial bike chain and led the group to Reach. His leadership has established a new tradition. It is an important step in the institutional recognition which was lacking at the station. The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge had also been invited, but gracefully declined. Perhaps next year we shall have sunshine and royalty on two wheels.

Sharing the road with cars is sometimes challenging. Many of our members have complained that professional drivers sometimes display aggressive, intimidating behaviour: squeezing past with only a foot of distance, overtaking at high speeds, forcing cyclists to yield, driving and stopping in bike lanes. Should it be a taxi driver who behaves in this manner, please note the taxi license number and submit a report. A better educated pool of drivers will reduce intimidating encounters and encourage more people to ride their bikes on the street rather than on the pavement. Educating professional drivers to obey the three-foot passing distance will make cycling through the city centre much more pleasant. We are optimistic that the taxi consultation currently under way (see page 5) will point a way in this direction.

Michael Cahn, Co-ordinator

Trial of two-tier racks at Cambridge station



At long last new cycle parking racks have appeared at Cambridge station! At the beginning of May some of the Sheffield stands near the front of the station were removed and replaced by three different styles of two-tier racks. The three designs use different methods for getting bikes onto the upper tier, using counter-balances, strong springs or hydraulics to raise and lower the upper rack.

If they are acceptable they have the potential to vastly increase cycle parking capacity and will set the scene for cycle parking all over the place for years to come. It is expected that the new 3,000-space covered cycle-park which is to be built at the station will include two-tier

racks, as well as, we hope, Sheffield stands for those whose bicycles will not fit onto the two-tier racks or who, for whatever reason, cannot or do not wish to use them.

There have been two-tier racks at some London stations and Edinburgh Waverley for several years. Has anyone any experience of them? We are keen to get users' actual experiences, not assumptions. We do not know, for example, whether people will perceive the lower racks as easier to use and therefore preferable, or whether they will use the upper racks as they consider their bicycle will be safer up there. We have pressed for a 'try the stands' day to which people can be invited to come specially, without the stands being otherwise in use.

How was your parking experience?

The intention is to find out how well they work and how acceptable they are to users. Do give them a fair trial over a period and give us feedback (to contact@camcycle.org.uk).

Some of the issues to be considered are:

- How easy is it to get one's bicycle onto the upper tier?
- How easy are they to use by shorter/older/less fit people?
- Can spaces be blocked by something wide/high on a lower rack?
- Can you actually lock your frame to these?
- What sort of bikes do not fit on the upper tier?

The Sheffield stands that were removed have been reinstalled near the new bus stops.

Monica Frisch

New address

We are changing our address. From 1 June, our address will be:

Cambridge Cycling Campaign, 2 Llandaff Chambers, Regent Street, Cambridge CB2 1AX

Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service, of which we are long-standing members, has kindly made arrangements for us to receive mail there for us to collect.

This is quite a big administrative change, and we don't do it lightly. But the cost of our PO Box has shot up over the last three years and now costs around six times what it did, so that it would have cost us over £1 just to receive each letter from September!

There's an added advantage that there is a letter box in the door, so if you want to

drop a membership renewal in by hand to save the stamp, this is now possible. It is immediately to the north of Mandela House, opposite the Sainsbury's Local shop.

We're also making some changes to how membership cards are handled, to try to cut down the number of letters we need to send, as the recent dramatic increase would otherwise have added £200 to our annual postage bill. We'll let you know individually about this as your membership comes up for renewal.

Don't worry if you've sent something to the PO Box recently – there will be an overlap. Phone numbers, email addresses, etc are unchanged.

David Earl, Membership Secretary

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The Chisholm Trail: step by step



The 'Chisholm Trail' would be a premier cycling route in Cambridge running north to south, following much of the railway line.



The northern bridge on Newmarket Road has spare arches; the southern one would require drilling.



Access from Moss Bank (houses, above) could link the trail with the new station.



The trail may have to go around the ramblers' bridge on Stourbridge Common.



The Science Park station is progressing and should greatly benefit people who live or work in the north of Cambridge. The new station should also relieve the congested area around the central train station of a large number of car journeys. Cambridgeshire County Council presented outline plans for the new station on 22 March, receiving much input from local residents. As the newsletter went to press, it was discussed again on 17 May as part of the Northern Corridor Area Transport Plan.

The County Council has not set a date for the completion of the Chisholm Trail. Rather, it seems to be considered as a project to be completed as elements become available for implementation. But the benefits of a 'cycle and pedestrian bridge along the alignment of the rail corridor, possibly cantilevered from the existing rail bridge or possibly an independent structure' [North Area Committee Agenda] seem to be well understood at the council. This so-called Chesterton Cycle Bridge could cost up to £1,500,000, subject to further study, and would be a key and probably the most expensive element of the Chisholm Trail. It would connect with ramps down to Fen Road near the level crossing and the National Cycle Network on the Jubilee path. This bridge would bring the Science Park station within walking distance for people in Fen Ditton.

Cambridgeshire's cycling czar on the Chisholm Trail

Cambridgeshire's new Cycling Champion, Councillor Martin Curtis, has viewed the Chisholm Trail from a bike. The trail minimises its impact by going alongside the railway line, as an alternative to walking or cycling across Stourbridge Common and the busy Green Dragon Bridge. The new developments will also provide a safe route for residents from the north of Cambridge to reach the area between Newmarket Road and Addenbrooke's and will take many cycle commuters to the Science Park away from Water Lane and Green End Road.

Travel the Trail click by click

The Campaign will work hard to ensure that the Chisholm Trail is easily accessible, despite some difficulties, as much of the Trail goes on Network Rail land and some of it through little-known industrial estates. To view the Cyclestreets image gallery of the areas and find out more about the Trail, visit <http://www.camcycle.org.uk/campaigning/cycleroutes/chisholmtrail/>. Here you can also follow the railway track from Milton Road to Cambridge Station click by click, showing each image with its location on a map or aerial picture.

Klaas Brümman

Twenty is not plenty for Cambridgeshire Police

Compare the following headlines:

POLICE CAST DOUBT ON 20MPH LIMIT'S FUTURE

The future of Cambridge's central 20mph limit should be questioned because speeding is the "norm rather than the exception", a police chief said.

JOINT SPEED OPERATION PROMOTES 20MPH SAFETY MESSAGE

Portsmouth City Council, the police and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service have carried out an operation targeting speeding motorists in the city.

You might be mistaken and think the former was from 2008 and the latter from 2012, but clearly the police in Cambridgeshire have not caught up with the national trend.

There is no doubt that laws can be difficult to enforce if there is very poor compliance, and that education and perhaps some minor engineering is needed for recent 20mph areas. Education should aim to change the attitudes of the majority. We've most definitely seen these changes with drink driving, and the compliance with 30mph speed limits in urban areas has been improving in recent years for similar social reasons.

Engineering for 20mph limits usually means using expensive measures such as speeds humps which are unpopular with many road users. Cheaper alternatives are painted lines and good signage. These could be better used.

Government guidance has recognised these factors with the most recent publications suggesting that the default speed for residential and shopping streets should be 20mph and without the requirement of traffic calming measures. This would, of course, still leave our major radial and ring roads at 30mph.

Officers reported that the roads are too dangerous to stop speeding motorists

Hence it is hard to see how the police in Cambridgeshire justify their entrenched attitude, with officers reporting to an area committee that the roads are too dangerous to stop speeding motorists. Has anyone done a proper cost-benefit analysis of 20mph areas in Cambridge? The suggestion was that 36 hours of police time had been wasted

on non-enforcement of the 20mph limits in the central area. I wonder how many hours of police time are wasted in investigation of crashes where inappropriate speed is a significant factor?

In 2009 the 'official' cost of a serious injury in a crash was £178,000. In the central area of Cambridge, now restricted to 20mph, there were 14 such crashes involving a motor vehicle between 2005 and 2010. If sticking to 20 just reduced this number by one third we'd save over half a million pounds. If it helps to save anything like that amount surely 36 hours of police time is a good investment.

It is perhaps worth noting that the Parliamentary Select Committee on Transport has said: 'a rule which is not enforced is a rule that is not observed'. In order not just to save money but to make Cambridge streets more pleasant places for all we should expect this law to be enforced.

Jim Chisholm

Will taxi licensing system control rogue drivers?

The city council is currently consulting on a new licensing system for taxis and private hire vehicles. The good news is that it envisages consumer complaints being taken into account in determining whether a driver is a fit and proper person to drive a taxi, which means that if bad driving is reported, the report is likely to have some effect. At present (at least at the time of an FOI request last year) no record is kept of complaints on a driver's record.

Two options are put forward in the consultation. Option 1 is a points system, where offences and complaints both accrue points. Option 2 treats them separately, and significant sanctions only arise for a serious number of offences or a large number of 'complaints of a similar nature'. We strongly prefer Option 1, and we do not believe that Option 2 will work in practice.

But even Option 1 is limited. As proposed, complaints and offences only remain current for 12 months. This is far too short, and to be fair to drivers (whose livelihoods depends on their licences) a high trigger level is proposed, of 5 unsubstantiated complaints in the period (fewer if there are also convictions). We are proposing that there should also be triggers over 36 months and 60 months.

Roger Salmon

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Can our urban roads cope with longer semi-trailers?



Logistics at its worst: this 13.5m trailer should never have entered our city centre.

In January, a trial started of articulated vehicles with longer semi-trailers, the government having given permission for some 1,800 longer vehicles. 900 of these are allowed to be 2.05 metres longer than the present maximum trailer length of 13.6m.

Although these longer lorries can be no heavier than existing vehicles, and must pass the turning circle regulations as specified in both EU and UK Construction and Use 1986 regulations, these vehicles will pose particular problems in urban areas. There are no proposals to restrict such access.

All normal vehicles, and such trial combinations, are required to pass both a 'concentric circles' and a 'drive-through' test to supposedly limit off-tracking issues, and although semi-trailers can be constructed to pass the regulations, it is the regulations that fail, especially for long semi-trailers.

For the concentric circles test, a steady state turn with the outside corner of the tractor unit just inside a circle of radius of 12.5 metres is required to have no part of the tractor-trailer combination inside an inscribed circle of 5.3 metres. Simple geometry shows that for a single-axle trailer, the axle needs to be about 8 metres from the fifth wheel (king pin) position for a typical arrangement with a three-axle tractor unit. This would give an overhang of some 6 metres behind the rear axle (see diagram on next page). Such a vehicle would not have much practical use unless

all it carried was potato crisps, as the single trailer axle would soon be overloaded, but it is easy to imagine the out-swing should such an articulated vehicle make an especially sharp, but totally practical turn.

It is quite unreasonable to expect other road users to be able to predict the path and off-tracking of such vehicles

For the drive-through test, the combination is required to move from a straight line to follow a tangential arc of radius 12.5 metres. At no time must the out-swing of the rear corner of the trailer be more than 0.8 metres. This is hardly a demanding test, even with our odd single-axle trailer. A typical tractor unit could turn on a radius of 8 metres or less, and the tangential arc rule means that even after a 90 degree turn significant amounts of steering lock remain unused.

To really test the out-swing, and to be more representative of tight urban junctions, full lock needs to be applied over a mere metre or so, with the tractor unit continuing on full lock until it has turned through more than 90 degrees. Then we will get an out-swing well in excess of 2.5 metres. This is just the sort of turn needed to enter a side

road with a lane width of 3.75 metres.

So how does this change with a typical longer semi-trailer, carrying normal loads on multiple axles?

Very little. Clearly we need additional axles to carry the weight, but they must not significantly change the position of our 'effective' single-axle or the trailer will fail the concentric circle test. The method normally used on existing long trailers tends to have self-steering axles to the rear of a fixed axle. These act a bit like castors, taking a share of the weight but not changing tracking from that of a single-axle trailer. Self-steering axles can be used on the new longer trailers, but another option is to use 'command' steer, where the axles are steered according to the angle of articulation. This at least means that, unlike with self-steering, tracking is the same in reverse as in forward, but the out-swing on sharp turns will be equally bad.

Is this not like carrying a long plank on your shoulder? No, it is even worse. At least with a plank you can look over your shoulder and see where the back end is. With these sharp turns the out-swing will always be on the blind side where no cab mirrors, however good, can enable the driver to see.

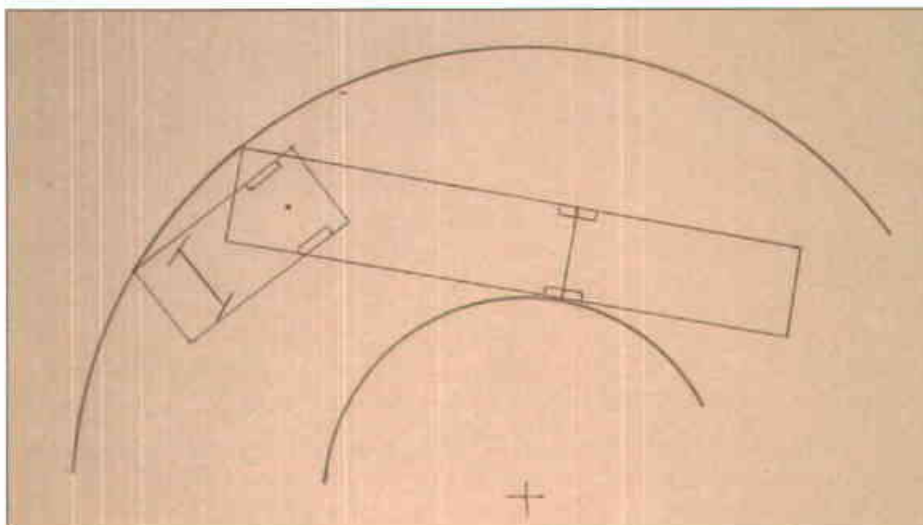
The TRL-commissioned report on off-tracking issues failed to consider in detail any turns other than those defined in legislation. It failed to use a widely used computer program to model sharp turns,

and it failed to look at off-tracking issues encountered by existing 13.5 metre trailers at tight, light-controlled junctions where they commonly use adjacent traffic lanes or cross onto the wrong side of the road.

Currently, legal draw-bar trailers with a rigid lorry can carry almost the same volume of goods as the new longer semi-trailer without serious off-tracking issues. However the distribution industry considers these less flexible, hence the request to government for longer semi-trailers. Is this not a case of the cart leading the horse?

How does this affect other road users? Often, people such as those on bicycles, or even in cars, are blamed in incidents involving long trailers. It is quite unreasonable to expect such road users to be able to predict the complex path and very significant off-tracking of such vehicles. But equally it is quite reasonable for the qualified driver of such a longer trailer to understand how it will off-track. The commissioning of even longer semi-trailers can only make this position worse.

Government ministers have even said in parliament: 'Because the turning wheels of longer semi-trailers are at the back, their turning circles are much tighter than those of existing lorries'. I fail to understand how



Concentric circles test for articulated vehicle with 15.5 metre semi-trailer

that fits with existing regulations. For tight turns where out-swing of existing ones is clearly a problem, unless the longer trailer bends in the middle, or the laws of physics are changed, the extra two metres at the rear must create greater problems.

Of course, such extra-long trial semi-trailers could be restricted to government-funded Highways Agency roads where such tight turns are rarely found. Special permission would then be required when using locally-funded roads. With improved

Sat-Nav systems this would be easy and cost-effective to introduce. At least then we might be able to control the damage to footways and street furniture that is an unrecoverable cost for local authorities.

Jim Chisholm

In the late 1970s Jim developed TRACK, the first practical computer model that could predict the path of complex vehicles when manoeuvring. He now campaigns on transport issues and is the volunteer liaison officer with Cambridge Cycling Campaign.

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The image of cycling is changing

We have seen marked increases in cycling in Cambridge, as in London and elsewhere. The city and county councils are both supporting the 'Cities fit for Cycling' campaign, with no councillor voting against the motion. The obesity epidemic and lack of exercise make alarm bells ring. Truly the image of cycling is changing and more people are recognising the benefits of cycling, with councillors highlighting personal freedom, health benefits and the bike as a relief from rising fuel prices.

But it seems that a lot of people who never cycle have very strong opinions about what cyclists look like and what they should wear. Unfortunately, as well as as having low levels of cycling, this country suffers from large numbers of drivers with no experience of cycling, which may distort public views.

Some descriptions of cyclists cater for controversy. Jeremy Clarkson wrote in a *Sunday Times* supplement (8 April 2012):

'In Britain cycling is a political statement. You have a camera on your helmet so that motorists who carve you up can be pilloried on YouTube. You have shorts. You have a beard and an attitude. You wear a uniform.'

Damian Thompson wrote in a *Daily Telegraph* column (20 April 2012):

'I enjoyed the rant by John Griffin, Addison Lee's chairman, who reckons cyclists are making the roads more dangerous. I agree, but that's only one of their crimes. Many's the dinner party ruined by the arrival of the last guest: a helmet-clad cyclist stinking of sweat and self-righteousness ...'

And then there is a constant stream of letters in the *Cambridge News* complaining about cyclists without hi-viz or helmets, some even claiming this to be illegal, which of course it is not.

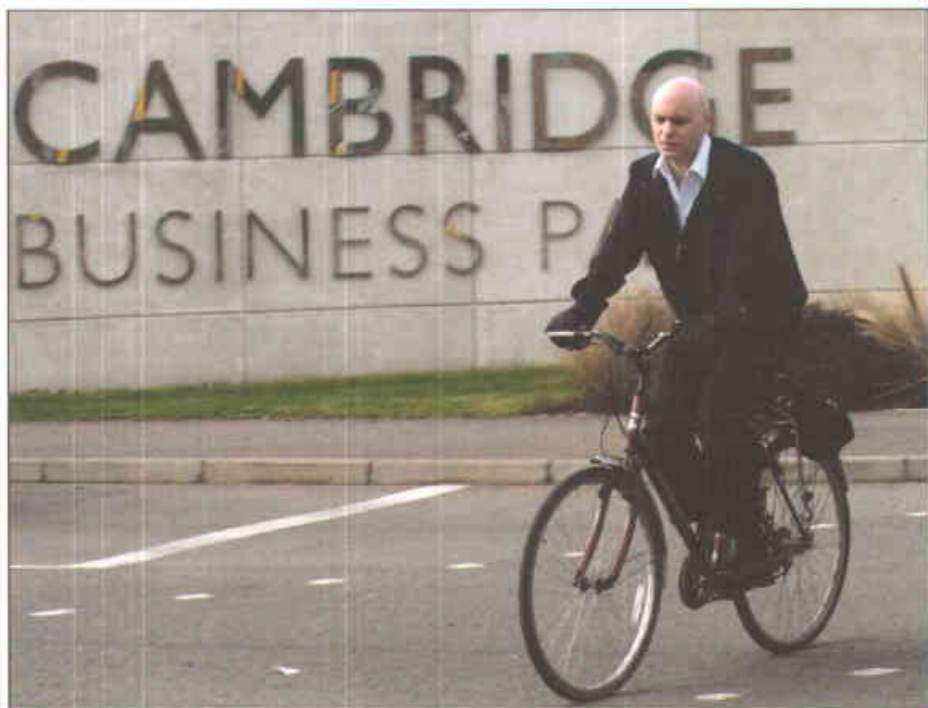
In places with higher levels of cycling and where cycling feels safe such opinions would be completely alien (as Mr Clarkson himself observed in Copenhagen). Cambridge is developing a growing number of routes where beginners and less confident cyclists can feel safe, e.g. the Coton Path, the Shelford to Addenbrooke's path, the Snakey and Tins Paths, the Millennium Path and Haling Way, the St Ivo and Great Kneighton Cyclebahn, and it appears all parties with representatives on the council are committed to building the Chisholm Trail from the Science Park to Cambridge station. Observing cyclists on such segregated paths it seems that cycling in Cambridge looks a lot more relaxed, safe and sensible (like in Holland or Denmark) than it is described in some parts of the national media.

In order to document the image of cycling I have been taking pictures of cycling commuters in Cambridge at rush hour during the Easter holidays and I will try to complement these with pictures throughout the year. See the Everyday Cyclists gallery at <http://cycle.st/g206>

But where can we go from here and what else can we do to improve the image of cycling and cyclists? Cambridge Cycling Campaign needs more people to campaign actively, e.g. in subject-specific sub-groups, to ensure that the standards of cycling infrastructure improve. If you need support or information on specific concerns please contact the members list or a committee member.

Klaas Brümman





CycleNation conference on Cycling and Health: winning the arguments



Closing questions in the Cycling and Health conference explore how the evidence presented can be turned into action.

This conference in Birmingham had a strongly focussed agenda and a panel of speakers from the legal and medical professions who presented evidence in a forensic way about how cycling is promoted, and the impact on health. Looking back, it was like a trial, with the cycle helmet in the dock, effectively accused of doing a great deal of harm to the perception of cycling as a safe and healthy activity.

bodies' physiology evolved by hunting for food, eating well when we've got some, then resting.

Almost everywhere that cycle helmets have been promoted has seen a drop in cycling levels. This drop results in less exercise for that population, and because the exercise is such a strong lever to healthier longer life the overall effect is that the population lives shorter, less healthy lives.

The cycle helmet was in the dock, effectively accused of doing a great deal of harm to the perception of cycling as a safe and healthy activity

Organised by CycleNation, a federation of cycling campaign groups, the capacity audience of fifty delegates represented groups from all around the UK. Jim Chisholm and I were there for Cambridge Cycling Campaign.

The debate about cycle helmets has been one of the most divisive forces in cycling promotion over the last twenty years. National cycling groups have successively fought off repeated calls for helmets to be made compulsory in the UK. The conference was called with the intention of scrutinising and sharing the evidence with cycling campaigners to equip them to challenge the argument that you should always wear a helmet.

Cyclists live longer

... and they enjoy better sex were Professor Bruce Lynn's conclusions (University College, London). His research shows just how much even a little bit of exercise can strikingly improve your chances of living longer and healthier. He also said that it is not unhealthy to be overweight – provided you keep fit. Keeping fit is the key part because exercise flushes away bad cholesterol. Our



Delegates hear evidence about how helmets put people off cycling.

Systematic errors

Malcolm Wardlaw is a co-author of 'Health on the Move' by the Transport and Health Study Group. That casts helmet promotion as a threat to public health like cigarette advertising.

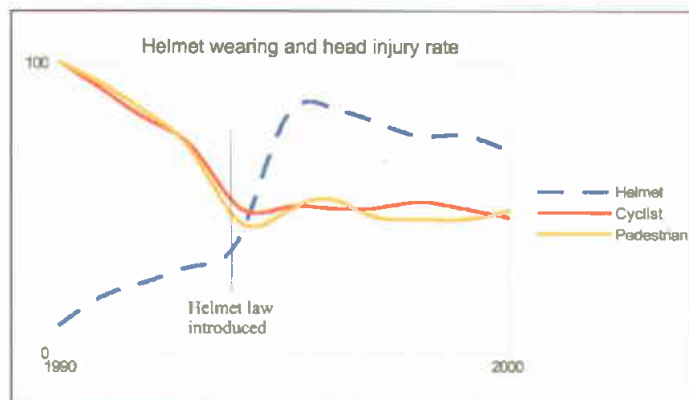
The key point of his presentation is that the way transport safety is measured (by distance rather than time) leads to ridiculous conclusions, such as that walking is 545 times as dangerous as driving.

The main problem is that these numbers have made it into powerful publications that affect decisions as to how much investment should be made in supporting walking and cycling transport modes. They are doing a lot of damage.

I asked why such blatant errors are not being addressed; the answer seemed to be that there's an institutionalised unwillingness to challenge them within the relevant circles.

Dr Peter Ward GP

Peter has studied the statistics from countries around the world where helmet compulsion has been introduced. For me the striking outcome of his work was the graphs of before and after helmet compulsion laws were introduced. Helmet wearing rates went up, but head injury levels remained constant.



After helmet compulsion laws are introduced, helmet wearing rates go up hugely, but there is no corresponding drop in head injury rates to cyclists. This chart has been simplified, the originals shown in the talk can be found at: <http://cyclehelmets.org/1139.html>

Duty of care

Martin Porter QC spoke of his experiences in the courts. He won a case in which a cyclist had ridden off the pavement into the path of a driver doing 35 in a 30mph street. The judge decided that the driver had a duty of care to the cyclist and should have slowed down to 27mph, the speed which would have given him the chance to stop in time. However the judge reduced the compensation to the cyclist by 50%, citing the fact he was not wearing a helmet was 'contributory negligence'.

Road danger reduction

In road traffic statistics the term KSI refers to the numbers of people killed or seriously injured. Dr Robert Davis (Road Danger Reduction Forum) opened by asking if we'd like to set a target for the number of KSIs on our local streets.

His arguments built on the idea that everything done in the name of 'road safety' is the opposite of what we should be doing. He cites the unwillingness to tackle the main cause of road danger at source, namely vehicle speed. The opposite usually gets done: wider visibility splays, extra grippy surfaces at junctions and pedestrian crossings, removal of camber – all these encourage drivers to maintain their speed.

A rider was concussed by cycling into a lamppost on the cycleway in Hyde Park parallel to Park Lane in London. By contrast, all hazards like that are removed from roads, and even from the road edges. One report he showed said that 'trees are a main hazard to motorcyclists' – this got a big laugh from the audience – but when the same was shown to highway engineers – not a titter.

He was calling for campaigners to move away from neutrality about helmet wearing, towards active resistance by always asking for evidence when challenged.

David Dansky

David was speaking on behalf of Cycle Training UK (CTUK), a workers co-operative that is one of the main organisations delivering Bikeability training in London.

He presented his arguments from the point of view of the young cyclists looking forward to their Bikeability training. At the cycle shed a grim poster from head injury charity "Headway" shows a cyclist splayed across the road with the message that 'Cycle Helmets' can save your life. Helmets must be correctly fitted and quite a time in the lesson is taken up with that. Then there are pupils with hair that just won't accommodate a lid. The result is that time is taken away from on-street training.

The number of children that have hit their head after falling from a bike in all the years has been zero.

The Bikeability scheme started out with a very strong pro-choice ethos, but the pressure is now applied by schools many of which insist on compulsion for their training.

CTUK is now setting up TABS (the association of Bikeability suppliers) with a view to maintaining the standards enshrined in the original vision.

Closing remarks

The day finished with a Q&A session focussing on what to do next. I thanked them for what I found a very useful and strong conference and promised I'd write this article to inform our members of the latest issues in this debate.

Following on from this conference I am inclined to look further at the long list of websites that explain all these arguments in greater detail. The evidence presented at the conference was strong and considered, but outside that environment I find it hard to make persuasive clear arguments why not wearing a helmet is perfectly rational. I don't want to be like a hedgehog using a prickly shell for limited defence, I'd much rather be like a meerkat, alert and vigilant.

Simon Nuttall

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Springwatch on the way to work

One of the benefits of cycling to work is the ability to do your own 'Springwatch', especially if you cycle across the commons or near the river, or indeed anywhere there is little enough heavy traffic that you can put some of your attention into observing other things; so hopefully those of you using the cycleway by The Busway, for example, may also be seeing and hearing interesting things.

The sight of a pair of common terns made me forget horrid headwinds and torrential rain

I must say the sound of the first chiff-chaff of the year was very welcome, as has been their chiff-chaffing almost every morning since! If you do cycle along the river, watch out for the common terns. The highlight of my first sighting of the year, which cheered me enough, was the bonus of the bird immediately diving straight into the water and coming up with really quite a large fish in quite spectacular manner! The other morning there was a pair patrolling and I've seen them all the way from Baits Bite Lock to Midsummer Common. Whether it's the same birds, who have a large territory, or different individuals, I don't know. I must say they've made me forget horrid headwinds or torrential rain, both of which we've had a lot recently, which normally threaten to make me thoroughly miserable.



The river is a rich source of birdlife.

I've not seen, as of the beginning of May, many swallows, perhaps one or two, so I'm not convinced that they've properly returned. Given the cold and wet April we've had, they've probably made the right decision. However, on the first day of May, after such a foul wet cycle ride in the morning, it was rather good to see a good lot of swifts high over the river on the journey home. And I've finally heard and seen a whitethroat. Perhaps at some point I might be cycling in shorts and a skimpy top, rather than full rain gear including wellies!



It's lovely to see the cows back on Midsummer and Stourbridge Commons. It's good that some people are using their Commoners' rights. I had a rather closer and slightly alarming encounter with wildlife the other morning, when a squirrel dashed out of a garden and straight under my front wheel! It then ran away, despite me stopping to see what damage I'd done, so squirrels clearly are as indestructible as they are clever. Normally, like the one another morning that I had a near miss with, they do a very rapid U-turn, quicker than lightning, so I really was surprised actually to hit one.

Another cheering sight and sound, especially if it's not such a nice morning, or I'm feeling tired, is cycling past the old Penny Ferry/Pike and Eel pub, which seems to be home to many house sparrows. I hope any redevelopment plans take this into account, as sparrows have alarmingly declined in numbers recently, probably directly owing to habitat loss. The sparrows continue until the Green Dragon, as there are lots of bushes and hedges on Water Street, and sometimes I hear them on Riverside. Recently, some seem to have



Red Poll cattle on Midsummer Common.

taken up residence on some guttering in Fair Street, which previously hadn't been a particularly interesting bit of my journey.



Blackthorn in full bloom.

My journey then takes me across to the Catholic Church, where, rather inappropriately, I always say 'I enter Hell', although the improved railway bridge on Hills Road is now no longer purgatory. So my observations are somewhat thin for the rest of the time. However, several times I have heard, but never seen, as I'm paying far too much attention to the traffic and road, a gang of long-tailed tits somewhere near Cavendish Avenue. I think I've heard a woodpecker on the same stretch, probably as many of the houses still have their lovely mature trees.

So perhaps more of us, especially if we're getting bored with the same old route day after day, should keep a notepad at our destinations to log the changing seasons? It's certainly given an added richness to my daily routine.

Heather Coleman

How does commuting affect our well-being?

As policy makers around the world come to terms with the inadequacies of using gross domestic product as the sole way to measure social progress, the idea of using trends in self-reported well-being has started to take off. David Cameron is particularly keen on this idea, having taken the decision to include four questions on well-being in the National Household Survey, conducted by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) several times per year. The ONS data means that, for the first time, we will be able to see how self-reported well-being changes over time across the UK, and how it is linked with numerous demographic factors.

But will all this new information serve any useful purpose? I recently completed a Masters in Environmental Policy here in Cambridge, in the Department of Land Economy. For my research project I wanted to look at how this new research on well-being could impact on one particular policy area – transport.

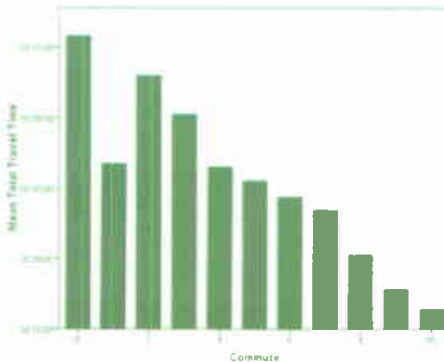
In 2006 acclaimed economists Kahneman and Krueger* surveyed 909 working women in Texas and found that commuting was on average the least happy time of their day. Reading the paper, I immediately thought of my last regular commute – I had lived in Romsey and worked in offices near the railway line on Newmarket Road. My daily commute had been a ten-minute cycle through back streets and over Coldham's Common. The suggestion that this was somehow the least happy part of my day was laughable.

I wanted to look further into this issue of commuting and well-being, and find out whether there were any key factors that affected how much people enjoyed their journeys to work. If commuting really is the least happy time in our day – what can be done to make it better?

Views on commuting

I set up an online survey which was filled in by around 500 people during May 2011. The survey asked participants to think only about the previous day. Various questions were asked about their commute, such as the time taken, mode of transport, and landscape travelled through. Participants were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with their commute, as well as how strongly they felt a range of emotions whilst travelling. These included things like 'impatient for it to end'; 'hassled/pushed around' and 'enjoying myself'.

My survey uncovered several things of interest to transport policy makers. Firstly, the length of time a commute takes was strongly correlated with satisfaction with commute, and well-being whilst commuting.



Participants' ratings (from 1 to 10) of their commute satisfaction are lower when their total travel time is longer.

The results clearly imply that shorter commutes make for higher satisfaction levels and higher levels of well-being whilst travelling.

The next big thing to influence commute satisfaction is transport mode. People who travel to work on foot or by bicycle are much more likely to be satisfied with their commute, and find it a positive experience.

One area where cycling fared particularly well was in the emotion 'enjoying myself'. Cyclists enjoyed their journeys significantly more than commuters using any other transport type, including those who walked.

What to learn from this research? The message that cycling is the most enjoyable form of transport is something that as keen cyclists we all know, but worth highlighting to policy makers who might be less easily convinced. The results on commuting time are also important. The growing trend for people to commute longer and longer distances to work is dangerous for our well-being. The government should focus on policies that will reduce commuting times, such as increasing employment opportunities outside the main cities, increasing the amount of affordable housing available close to centres of work, and encouraging more home working. Each of these policies could have a big impact on commute satisfaction. Clearly, making it easier for people to cycle and walk to work is also crucial. *The Times* Cities Fit for Cycling campaign seems to have created some real enthusiasm for action on cycling in Westminster – we can only hope this momentum continues, and spreads to other cities around the UK.

In the UK we spend about 150 hours per year commuting. Transport policy is generally dictated by economic demands (with the odd nod to environmental concerns). Perhaps it is time the government looked more closely at how they can build a transport network that puts commuter satisfaction and well-being first. The brilliant thing that this research has shown is that what is best for our well-being – cycling and walking – is best for the planet, too.

Sarah Whitebread

*Daniel Kahneman & Alan B. Krueger, 2006. "Developments in the Measurement of Subjective Well-Being," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 20(1), pages 3-24, Winter.

Bike harvest 2012

The bike harvest is a way in which students can donate their old bikes to a charity instead of leaving them unwanted around Cambridge. There are two major benefits from this: reduced pressure on bike parking and recycling of bicycles.

The bikes will, where possible, be refurbished by a local charity, OWL, that employs disadvantaged young people. OWL also collects unwanted bikes from some bike parks in Cambridge such as the station.

They can then cover their costs by selling the bikes back to new students. In 2013 the Campaign hopes to obtain a grant or sponsorship to help expand and improve the harvest. The long-term goal is to reduce to a minimum the number of abandoned bikes in Cambridge while creating some local employment in a green industry.

Students can donate their old bikes by taking them to a collection point in the Park Street cycle park at the end of Easter term.

Opening dates: Monday 11 June 2012 to Friday 15 June 2012 and Monday 25 June 2012 to Friday 29 June 2012

Opening hours: 12.00 noon to 3.00pm

Location: Park St Bike Park CB5 8AS. The entrance is marked by a blue sign and blue painted path.

John Hall

Campaign Diary

June

Tue 5	8.00pm	Monthly General Meeting. Friends' Meeting House, Jesus Lane (with tea and coffee from 7.30pm, and a chance to chat, and for us to introduce ourselves to new members). This month's meeting includes a presentation by Dr Liz Robin, NHS Director of Public Health (Cambridgeshire), 'Public Health in Cambridge and the Bicycle: New Avenues and Opportunities'.
Sat 16		Bicycle Wheelbuilding Workshop (see page 15). A hands-on workshop where you learn how to assemble, true and optimise bicycle wheels using proven techniques. Class size restricted to ensure a high teacher-student ratio. Whether you simply want to replace an occasional broken spoke, true existing wheels or hand build a complete wheel, this workshop gives you the knowledge, skills and confidence you need.
Sun 24	10.30-12.30	Cambridge Contemporary Architecture by Bike. Members of The Cambridge Association of Architects (CAA) will be the guides for a bike tour of significant modern and contemporary architecture sites. The tour will focus on approaches to expansion and infill in the city. Participants should book a place on the tour by emailing riba.caa@googlemail.com . For more information, visit www.lovearchitecture.org/event.html?event=185

July

Sun 1		Newsletter 103 deadline. Please send copy to newsletter-articles@camcycle.org.uk . Members are warmly invited to write articles (style guidelines available) and are invited to contact the Editor (Monica Frisch: mfrisch@phonecoop.coop) in the first instance.
Tue 3	8.00pm	Monthly General Meeting (see 5 June for more details).
Sun 22		London to Cambridge bike ride. Come and enjoy a brilliant day out, and help raise vital funds for Breakthrough Breast Cancer. Starting from Pickett's Lock in north London, the ride winds through beautiful countryside to the finish at Midsummer Common in the heart of Cambridge, where you'll be met with music, refreshments and massage. Full details at http://www.bike-events.com/Ride.aspx?id=316

August

Tue 7	8.00pm	Monthly General Meeting (see 5 June for more details).
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Cycle rides

CTC Cambridge organises a variety of rides throughout the week, all year round. But there's a varied choice of rides: lots of favourites and most of them can be adjusted to suit the weather and the group on the day. On Sundays, they have all-day rides in addition to afternoon outings, and the twice-monthly Saturday morning introductory rides. There are also Tuesday and Thursday day rides, as well as Wednesday evening rides. **More information can be found online at www.ctc-cambridge.org.uk**

City and County Council committees

Campaign members may be interested to attend **Planning Committee and Area Committee** meetings, which often include cycling and walking issues.

Joint Development Control Committee meetings, which determine the Planning Applications relating to the major housing development proposals for the Cambridge sub-region, are also open to the public. Details of venue and agenda are available about a week beforehand at www.cambridge.gov.uk/democracy/

JUNE

Wed 6	10.00am	Development Control Forum
Wed 13	10.00am	Joint Development Control Committee: Cambridge Fringes
Wed 20	10.00am	Joint Development Control Committee – Cambridge Fringes – Development Control Forum
Thur 21	7.00pm	East Area Committee
Thur 21	7.00pm	West/Central Area Committee
Wed 27	9.30am	Planning Committee

JULY

Wed 4	10.00am	Development Control Forum
Wed 11	10.00am	Joint Development Control Committee: Cambridge Fringes
Mon 16	7.30pm	South Area Committee
Wed 18	10.00am	Joint Development Control Committee – Cambridge Fringes – Development Control Forum
Wed 25	9.30am	Planning Committee
Thur 26	6.30pm	North Area Committee

Launch of the 'You Can Bike Too' cycling project



An 'All Ability' Cycling Project Team led by people with disabilities is seeking to encourage more people to cycle. The project will establish an all-inclusive club at a safe off-road facility where people with and without disabilities can cycle together.

The launch event took place on 4 April, a wet and windy day, at Milton Country Park. The project currently has four adaptive bikes and five two-wheelers for people to cycle together, and additional bikes were brought to the event by Cycling Project 'Wheels For all' and Ashfield Bikes from Wisbech. This gave the visitors a 'taster' of what bikes are available and what it is possible for them to do!

Two hundred visitors turned up despite the rain and the event was deemed a fantastic success. The adaptive bikes were ridden by 74 people, some of whom had never ridden before. People with and without disabilities spoke enthusiastically about the event.

Here are a few of the comments from the day:

"I haven't been on a bike for years – good to come back on it!" Samantha

"The side by side companion bike was fantastic". Robin

"Feel the wind...makes me fly away!" Chris

"Awesome. Wicked. More easier for me to bike. I like pedalling fast". Anne Marie

"It is so companionable – families or friends can get out and have fun together". Ian Nimmo-Smith (Mayor).

The project is now seeking funding to buy more adaptive cycles so even more people can experience the opportunity to cycle. Sessions are being planned so that groups can cycle together in the park.

John Lewis has chosen 'You Can Bike Too' as one of their community projects to support. If you go to their café in their central Cambridge store and purchase a drink you will be given a green token – please put it in the You Can Bike Too box!

Bikes are currently available to hire in Milton Country Park on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 11.00am to 4.00pm at £5 an hour. Phone Milton Country Park to book on 01223 420060.

For more information about this project contact Ruth Brannan on 07521 905448 or email ruth@theyoucanhub.org.uk

BEN HAYWARD BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Celebrating 100 years in business

You are invited to our Rollapaluzza party. Ride against your friends and the clock!

Sunday June 24th 10am-4pm

Helmets half price all day, refreshments, test rides.

Ben Hayward Cycles, Notcutts, Horningsea CB25 9JG
01223 860471 www.benhaywardcycles.com

WHEELBUILDING WORKSHOP

Build your own wheels?

Have you ever wished you knew how to build bicycle wheels? I will be running another Bicycle Wheelbuilding Workshop in Cambridge on Saturday 16 June, where you can learn how to assemble, true and optimise bicycle wheels. This hands-on workshop gives you the knowledge, skills and confidence you need in a controlled environment.

You can download the current Information Sheet from www.davidwgreen.talktalk.net/wheelbuilding/wheel_bld_1day_info.pdf

For enrolment details and any questions, please email davidwgreen@onetel.com.

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REACH FAIR RIDE 2012



The Met Office's message for this year's May Bank Holiday was clear: cold and wet. And so a smaller group than last year, 168 at our official count at Stow-cum-Quy, joined the Campaign's ride. The Mayor of Cambridge, Ian Nimmo-Smith, gave an excellent speech about the history of the fair and cycling in Cambridge, sending us off from the Guildhall under an overcast sky. With a number of riders joining later and along the way to Reach, the count nearer the fair passed the mark of 200 bikes. The recce group had done a stellar job the previous Saturday and the route was clean and clear and all riders arrived in Reach without major incidents. Despite the weather a good number of families had joined the ride with children of all ages on child seats, trailers, trailing bikes, bakfiets, tandems or pedalling all the way on their own bikes.

The weather held fine for the traditional opening ceremony of the fair, led by the Mayor, who had cycled to Reach wearing the specially made mayoral bike chain. A number of other Councillors also joined the ride in support of Cambridge Cycling Campaign's bid to get more people on two wheels.

The return ride started with a persistent shower and riders without waterproofs were left soaking wet. However, the rain stopped and when we reached Cambridge my clothes had already dried.

Very many thanks to all volunteer marshals for doing such an excellent job of making this a friendly and fun event. And also many thanks to Campaign members for promoting the ride with friends, in clubs and at the workplace and to the Mayor and Councillors for supporting our aims.

Participants took many photographs, many of which can be seen online and can be reached through links at <http://www.camcycle.org.uk/events/rides/>

Klaas Brümman

Children's comments

Chloe: "On the long way to Reach, my mother and me had an uninterrupted talk. All this cycling to see a fair."

Bruno: "This was the fourth time we came to Reach by bike and I really liked that you waited for people lagging behind."

Garris: "I couldn't believe we cycled as long as a marathon is, going to Reach and back. I'm proud of doing it."



Cycling for fun

The University of the Third Age Cambridge (U3AC), for retired people, has some 2,500 members who run a comprehensive range of classes and activity groups, including a Cycling Club. This Club organises an extensive programme of daytime rides ranging from 15 to 35 miles, most starting in Cambridge, but sometimes the train is used to extend the range. Each ride leader chooses a route and a day that suits them, so there can be rides on any day from Sunday to Friday.

As can be seen from this small group in the photo, we are a sociable lot who enjoy



A sunny afternoon at Anglesey Abbey.

each other's company as much as the exercise and the countryside, and this summer we will add a programme of short Tuesday evening rides focused on a local pub.

We have also arranged a number of cycling holidays (3-5 days), often based on a Sustrans long-distance route, in such places as Wales, Northumberland, the Pennines and the Isle of Wight.

We are always keen to welcome new members, whatever their riding ability, and you can check out our current programme on the website www.u3ac.org.uk, as well as finding out about all the other things that the U3AC has to offer, or contact Beth Morgan on cyclingu3ac@gmail.com

Beth Morgan